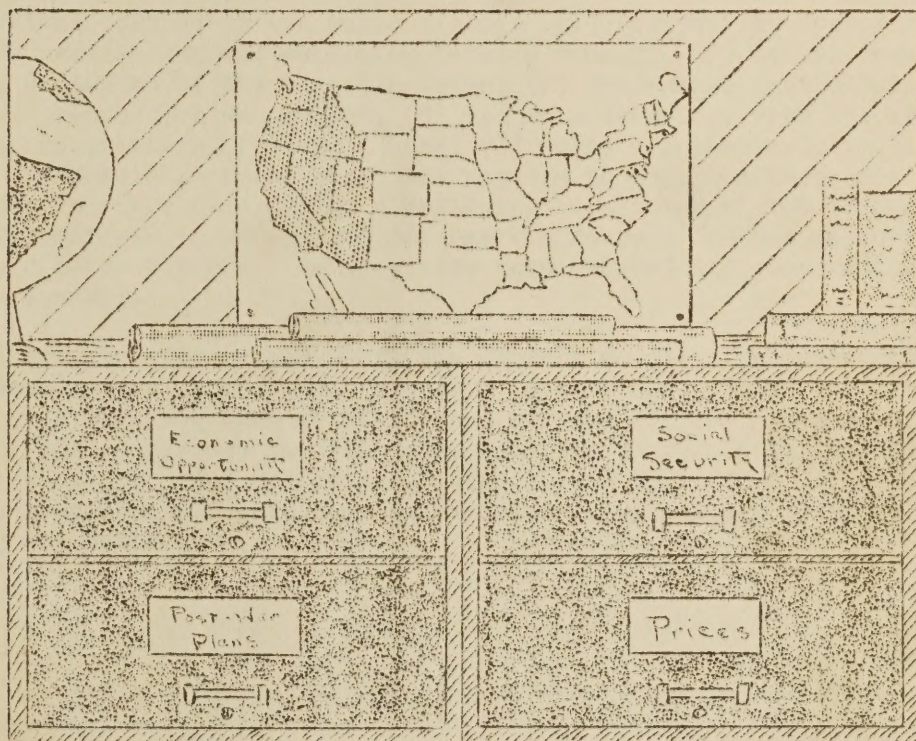


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For Administrative Use

# WESTERN FARMERS VIEW THE FUTURE



RURAL LIFE TRENDS REPORT, WESTERN REGION

✓ United States Department of Agriculture  
U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Berkeley, California  
July 1944





# WESTERN FARMERS VIEW THE FUTURE\*

## INTRODUCTION

Farm people make up an important part of our Western population. Knowing what farm people think about some of the critical issues of the day is a matter of real interest in gauging the pulse of Western public opinion. By interviewing periodically its more than seventy representative "key observers" <sup>1/</sup> living in four carefully selected counties, the western regional office of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, measures farmer thinking on a number of important or controversial issues. The report which follows summarizes the responses of these key observers to a series of prepared questions asked them during the month of May 1944.

The questions touched on six major fields: (1) Post-war prospects for demobilized service men and returning defense workers, (2) school consolidation and expansion of the school program, (3) Government control over agricultural production and prices, (4) Economic security, with special reference to problems of medical care, (5) wages and standards of living, and (6) international relations. The answers to each question were recorded under certain fixed categories, simplifying tabulation of the responses. The respondent was encouraged to discuss the reasons for his answers so that field notes taken on the interview supplemented and gave meaning to the bare answers.

One must remember, of course, that the answers as given represent the views of the respondents at the time they were interviewed. Their views may have changed greatly since then as new forces perhaps altered the person's attitudes, or their opinions may have changed little, if at all. Actually, these views as recorded are only a "sounding" of the channel of public opinion, good merely for the particular time and place but invaluable for charting its course.

## THE COUNTIES SAMPLED

The four counties in which the key observers were located were chosen to fit into a National pattern that would include all major types of rural areas in the United States. At the same time, they are typical of some important farming areas of the West. Clark County, Washington, for example,

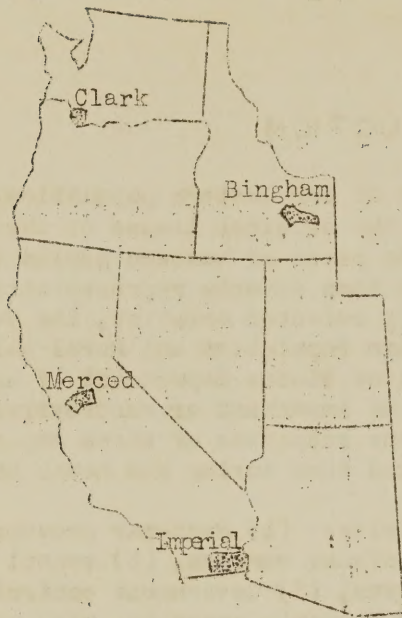
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\* This report was written by Carl F. Reuss, based on reports and field notes made in May 1944 by Walter C. McKain, Jr., for Imperial County; William Metzler, for Merced County; H. Otto Dahlke, for Clark County; and John S. Page, for Bingham County.

<sup>1/</sup> The "key observers" are local people, selected on the basis of recommendations by informed leaders of rural life in the county, and were chosen to represent all the important levels and strata of farm life in the county, both social and geographic. Fifteen were residents of Clark County, Washington; 15 of Bingham County, Idaho; 19 of Imperial County, California; and 23 of Merced County, California.

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represents that part of the Pacific Northwest lying west of the Cascade Mountains, especially those parts affected by defense and war activities. Bingham County, Idaho, is typical of much of Southern Idaho and Utah, where irrigation farming and compact settlement are the rule. Imperial County, California, represents large-scale specialized agricultural conditions found in much of Arizona and in parts of California, and Merced County, California, is typical of the diverse types of specialized agriculture found in California.

Clark County, Washington, lies just across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon. Its population has more than doubled during the defense-war period because of the location of major shipyards in and near the county. Farming in the county is predominantly on a small scale. Dairy and poultry products, small fruits, berries and nuts, and some vegetables are the chief items of production. Farmer cooperatives are especially strong in the county, in part because of its strong Scandinavian heritage. Many farmers have left their farms to take up shipyard work, thereby gaining more cash in one year than many of them previously had received in five or more years. The good agricultural land has not gone out of production, however, because other farmers have taken it over and have enlarged their own operations. Many of the newcomer defense workers are buying small tracts of land, in part to avoid the heavy congestion of population and in part to acquire an acreage from which they hope, in less prosperous times to gain a subsistence production to supplement their industrial earnings.

Imperial County, California, is an area of highly specialized agricultural production, so specialized in some instances that farm operators move from one farm to another in the crop rotation cycle in order to continue the production of their specialty. The chief crops are field crops, such as alfalfa, barley, flax, garden crops (particularly lettuce, melons, carrots, and peas) and some permanent crops such as grapefruit and oranges, all grown under irrigation. In addition, there is a considerable dairy and livestock industry in the county. The climate of Imperial Valley has markedly affected the social order of the county. Unlike other areas, its growing season occurs during the fall and winter months. The summer months are so hot that many people who can afford to do so leave the valley during this period. Schools, churches, business houses, and other institutions and agencies thus are deprived seasonally of both leadership and patronage.

Merced County, California, is a highly diversified county: in population, in agricultural production, and in size of agricultural operations. The

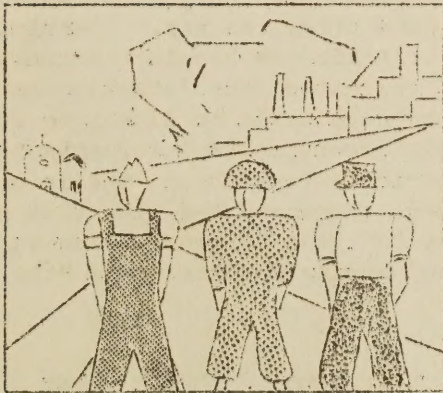


heterogeneous population includes people of Portuguese, Italian, Swedish, and Finnish extraction who are engaged especially in dairying, and Anglo-Americans, engaged principally in fruit production. Dairying is a highly important farming activity in the county, but the production of hay, grain, and cattle, and of deciduous fruits (such as peaches, figs, and apricots), and of grapes and nuts is also important in the agricultural economy. The fruit and dairy farms generally are small, although exceptionally large fig and peach orchards are located in the county. Other large operators are engaged in the cattle business. The majority of the farms in the county, nevertheless, are small.

Bingham County, Idaho, offers a considerable contrast to the other counties. Its farms typically are family farms, well diversified with potatoes, sugar beets, beans, dairy and hogs as important cash-yielding products. The population includes a large Mormon element, many of whom came from Utah to settle, but on the whole it is a highly homogeneous population. Three well defined communities oriented around the towns of Aberdeen, Blackfoot, and Shelley, divide the county into three distinct sections. As is typical of Mormon areas, there is much community life and community spirit in Bingham County, and some development of farmer cooperatives, accordingly, has taken place.

The sample of four counties thus ranges from a typical rural, agriculturally-centered county of family farms (Bingham County) to a county of highly specialized and commercialized large-scale agricultural production resembling more the urban factory type than the typical rural farm economy (Imperial County). Between the extremes lies Merced County, having characteristics of both. On the fringe is Clark County, which is a metropolitan and sub-urban county that has been intimately affected by defense and war activities.

## POST-DEMobilIZATION PROSPECTS



Western farmers are convinced that the Government should help returning veterans from farm homes get into farming by making land easily available to them. Only seven of the respondents, five of them in Imperial County and the other two in Merced County, believed that the Government should not take this means of helping ex-farm boys get back into farming. A majority, on the other hand, thought that the Government should not encourage ex-soldiers of nonfarm backgrounds to start farming. In explanation for this view, many observers



pointed out that farming is an occupation that demands a high degree of direct experience which a person ordinarily acquires only through personally growing up in the midst of it.

Two-thirds of the observers expressed the belief that the Government should help ex-soldiers from farm families to obtain work in nonfarm lines after demobilization. The Clark County observers dissented somewhat from this position, six of the fifteen believing that the Government should not help returning soldiers of farm backgrounds to go into nonfarm work. In each county some observers insisted that able-bodied veterans did not want to be singled out as a separate class for special treatment. Other observers declared that veterans deserved all possible assistance and consideration because they had given so much to the Nation in its time of need.

One-third of the observers would not, or could not, estimate what proportion of the persons from their communities who now are serving in the armed forces or working in defense plants are likely to return after the war. This uncertainty was especially marked in Bingham County, where only three of the fifteen observers ventured an opinion on the question. Individually the observers differed widely in their estimates, some figuring that all would return, others that only 10 percent would return. Imperial County observers were far less optimistic over the return of their former residents than were those in the other counties.

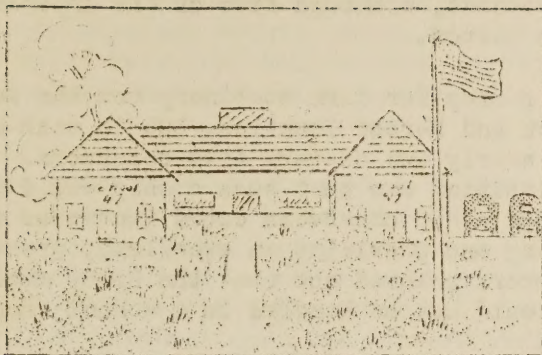
Except in Clark County, the observers generally agreed that the servicemen were somewhat more likely to return than were the defense workers. In Merced County around three-fourths of the defense workers and about seven of every eight soldiers were expected to return. Only a little over one-half of the soldiers, and a little less than one-half of the defense workers were expected to return to Imperial County. In contrast, practically all of the defense workers from Clark County were expected to live in the county after the war, mainly because for most of them their defense work involved merely a matter of commuting from their homes to the shipyards.

Returning soldiers were given somewhat more of a chance of finding jobs after the war than were the defense migrants, although again the individual estimates ranged from none to 100 percent. The greatest pessimism was found in Clark County, where the observers figured that only about one-third of the defense workers would find local jobs after the war. Clearly, the observers expected a serious deflation of their war booming community. In Merced and Bingham Counties around 90 percent of the returning soldiers and from 80 to 85 percent of the defense workers would be likely to find jobs, according to the observers. In Imperial County, the informants agreed, around three-fourths of both the returning veterans and the defense workers might expect to find work. Many persons expressed the view that returning service men should be given preference for jobs before defense workers inasmuch as the latter "had their chance" during the war while "the boys were away."

#### EXPANSION OF THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

In many rural areas the question of rural school consolidation represents a burning issue. In the counties surveyed, the consolidation of high schools





has been for the most part completed, and has met with favorable public reception, but proposals to consolidate rural elementary schools often open warm debates. Despite the intense interest often aroused by specific proposals for school consolidation, only two of the observers in Bingham County cared to express an opinion on the question as asked, both favoring the principle. In the other three counties, around three-fourths of the informants approved the principle of further consolidating rural schools. There was recognition, either expressed or implied, that consolidating schools helped to equalize educational opportunities between rural and

urban areas and to improve the curriculum available to rural youngsters. It should be pointed out, however, that numerous observers who favored the consolidation of high schools spoke strongly against consolidation of elementary schools. They feared both the effects on the children and the loss of a community center. Some approved the principle, but recognized serious legal and administrative problems.

Although around one-fourth of the observers were comparatively uninterested in the matter of the school curriculum, the majority were satisfied with the subjects taught in their schools. There was a certain amount of feeling, nonetheless, that schools should emphasize the three R's and give less attention to the "frills and extra-curricular activities."

Great support was found for the idea of making local school buildings available for community activities after school hours. None of the observers in Clark or Imperial Counties and only one in Bingham County was opposed to the idea. Four in Merced County did not favor the idea, partly because they feared some conflict with school activities. There was somewhat less support for the idea of expanding the school library to serve the adults of the district. Nearly two-thirds of the informants in Merced County, and around one-half in Clark and Imperial Counties favored the proposition. Only three of the Bingham County observers voiced an opinion on the question, although each of the three was favorable to the idea. In most cases the idea was new to the observers, and they had previously given little thought to the possibility. The answers in Merced County, however, reflected the fact that the schools already were being used to house units of the county library.

Three other questions, each involving a possible expansion of the school program in the post-war period, were put to the observers. One asked whether the school system should serve hot lunches, a second whether it should maintain a shop where farmers could take their machinery and repair

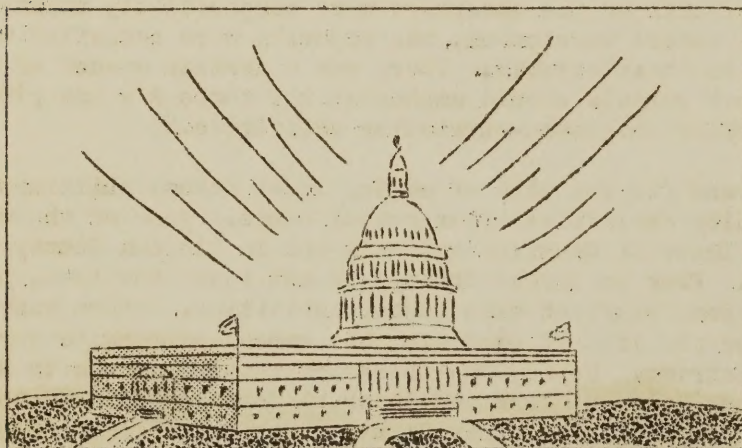


it, and a third whether it should operate a cannery for the convenience of farm families.

The hot lunch program was almost universally approved. Only two persons expressed opposition to this proposal, although five of the Imperial County observers were undecided on the matter.

The proposal for a school repair shop for farm machinery won the support of a three-fifths majority in Clark and Merced Counties, but in each county except Clark it was opposed by nearly two of every five observers. The chief argument expressed in opposition was that such a shop would compete with private enterprise, although other observers cited instances of where such shops already were operating and providing an excellent, greatly-needed service. Imperial County observers pointed out that the heavy machinery normally used in their county could not be handled in a school shop.

On the matter of whether or not the school should operate a cannery for the convenience of farm families there was no clear cut opinion. In Merced County a majority were opposed to the suggestion; in Clark County seven of the fifteen observers favored the proposition; and in Bingham County a majority were undecided on the question. In Imperial County more than one-third were in favor of the proposal, but almost as many were opposed. The chief opinion was that such a service would not be necessary, since most farm families had their own canning facilities. Some support was voiced, nevertheless, for the operation of a community canning center open to all residents of the district.



## GOVERNMENT CONTROLS

Farmers are certain that the expansion of Federal governmental activities into rural communities has proceeded far enough. Around one-fourth of the observers believed that Federal activities should remain at about their present level, but a majority of the 72 observers felt that they should be reduced. Only five informants, four of them in Merced County, were of the opinion that such activities should be expanded. They had in mind



especially the activities that would perhaps be required in post-war programs of demobilization and readjustment.

The sentiment for a reduction in Federal activities was especially strong in Clark County, where two-thirds of the observers held this view. It also was strong in Imperial County, where 11 of the 19 shared the feeling. On the other hand, less than half of the informants in Merced and Bingham Counties took a stand that favored a reduction of Federal activities in rural communities.

Wartime price regulations appear to have won the support of a majority of farmers, and are greatly preferred to a situation where there would be no price controls at all. Support for ceiling and floor prices was not uniform among the four counties, although in each county a clear majority of farmers would prefer price controls to an era of laissez-faire. It is clear, furthermore, that the answers reflect local experience with price control regulations on the products raised locally. Ceiling prices were favored most often in Imperial and Bingham Counties, where two-thirds of the observers declared themselves in favor of the idea. In Clark County, on the other hand, only one-third supported the plan, and in Merced County a majority expressed their opposition to price ceilings. Floor prices were strongly endorsed by the Bingham County observers, four-fifths of whom agreed that the Federal Government should continue to guarantee floor prices for farm products. In the two California counties opinion was almost evenly divided between support for an opposition to the floor prices program. In Clark County nearly one-half favored the program, but six of the fifteen observers were undecided on the issue.

Given a choice of operating under a combination of price floors and ceilings, or no price controls at all, for the next two years, farmers voted for price controls in a ratio of nearly 2 to 1. Again, support for controls was most apparent in Bingham County, but in each county more than half of the observers favored price controls to a situation of no controls.

Farmer beliefs on the probability of a post-war boom or depression directly affect their planning for the future, and so are a matter of real importance. Actually, there seems to be no prevailing farmer opinion on the question of whether there will be a boom or a depression within the first three years after the war. One-third of the Clark County and nearly one-half of the Bingham County observers believed there would be a depression within three years after the war, whereas only one-fourth of the Merced County and one-sixth of the Imperial County observers held a similar view. Two thirds of the observers in Imperial County, and nearly as large a proportion in Merced County, believed that there would not be a depression within the first three years after the war.

Opinion was even more widely divided on the likelihood of a business boom occurring within the first three years after the war. Only two of the fifteen observers in Clark County expected a business boom within this period, eleven of them saying there would not be such a boom. On the other hand, fourteen of the twenty-three observers in Merced County believed a business boom would come, and none of the Bingham County informants expressed the view that there would not be a business boom. Farmer views, of course, are colored by their local situations and local prospects, a point which is readily evident in



the Clark County situation. There almost all observers foresee the closing of the shipyards with the resultant closing down of many opportunities for work and good cash income.

## SECURITY AND MEDICAL CARE PROGRAMS



Some optimism over the future prospects for farming is suggested in the answers given to the questions, "Do you think farmers nowadays are worrying more, or less, than their fathers about being able to support themselves in old age?" and "Do you think young farm people, by and large, will find it more, or less, difficult to make a decent living on the farm than did their fathers?" In the case of the second question, a majority of the respondents in each county except Clark believed that young farm people would find it easier to make a decent living on the farm than did their fathers.

In Clark County only one-fourth of the observers shared this feeling, nearly one-half of the group believing that young people would find it more difficult. This feeling of pessimism almost certainly is explained by the prevailing smallness of farms and concentration of population in the county.

Farmers are divided in their opinions on the question of whether farmers to-day worry more about old age than did their fathers, although they are inclined to believe that they worry less. Again the Clark County observers expressed a more pessimistic note, for seven of the fifteen felt that to-day's farmers worry more about old age than did their fathers. The greatest air of confidence was noted in Bingham County, where four-fifths of the observers felt that today's generation worries less about old age than did its parents.

Good health is a factor closely related to economic security. A long siege of illness with resultant large medical and hospital bills usually strikes the average family a severe blow, threatening its economic security and lowering its standard of living. Asked whether the family could meet a bill of \$500 incurred for necessary medical and hospital expenses without lowering its standard of living, just about one-half of the observers in Clark, Bingham, and Merced Counties answered in the negative. Only in Imperial County was the feeling of economic security so great that nearly three-fourths of the families felt they could meet a medical bill of \$500 without curtailing their standard of living.



There is a strong sentiment among farmers for some means of making medical care either more widely or more easily available through clinics and flat-rate prepayment plans to cover hospital and doctor bills. Only five of the observers were opposed to an increase in the number of public clinics, although seventeen were undecided on the issue. In Clark County all but one, and in Imperial County all but two of the informants favored increasing the public clinic program to improve medical care. Two-thirds of the observers in Bingham County were undecided on the issue, but in none of the counties was there any strong feeling in opposition to the proposal. As several observers expressed it, "We take better care of our livestock than we do ourselves."

Flat-rate prepayment plans, on the same order as paying insurance premiums, to cover hospital and doctor bills were widely supported in each county except Merced County, and even there a majority of the observers favored the idea. The question as asked covered payment of services for both doctors and nurses, but some observers believed that nursing services should not be included in a prepayment plan.

## STANDARDS OF LIVING



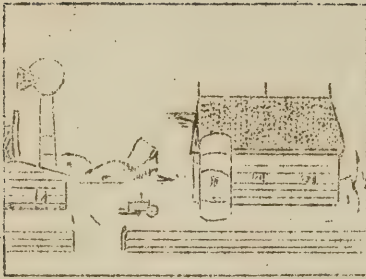
Wartime conditions have caused many families to postpone buying numerous items which they would have liked to buy. Some indication of the extent of this pent-up demand is found in the fact that nearly two-thirds of the families interviewed have in mind making a major purchase when wartime shortages are past. As is traditional among farmers, the first purchases they intend to make are items essential to the farm business, such as farm machinery or farm equipment. A second commodity

greatly desired was a new automobile. Some pent-up demand for household furnishings and conveniences, such as furniture, radios, and electricity, also was evident, and some construction of new homes likewise was indicated.

The changes that took place between 1942 and 1943 in family expenditures for food, clothing, and household furnishings were comparatively small. The majority of families spent about the same for food and for clothing in 1943 as they had in 1942, but some reduction occurred in expenditures for household furnishings, chiefly because of wartime shortages and quality deterioration. Investments in War Bonds increased greatly in Merced County and to lesser extents in Imperial and Bingham Counties, whereas the majority of observers in Clark County invested about the same amount in War Bonds in 1943 as they had in 1942.

Generally speaking, farmers appear to be fairly well satisfied with their present wartime incomes. Except in Clark County, at least a majority of the observers, and in Bingham County twelve of the fifteen, were content





to have gross farm incomes remain at about their present levels in the post-war period. All but one of the observers in Clark County suggested that farm incomes should go higher in the post-war period than they are now, whereas in none of the other three counties was there even one observer who stated that gross farm incomes should go higher than their present levels. The explanation probably is that farm incomes have for years been low in Clark County because most of the farms are small. Moreover, the producers of poultry and dairy products who predominate in the county have felt especially keenly the squeeze between controlled ceiling prices and rapidly rising cost of labor and feed.

In the other counties wartime-increased, gross incomes actually meant increased net incomes, but this was not true to the same extent in Clark County.

On the question of whether farm wages should rise higher, drop lower, or remain about the same in the post-war period, there was almost a north-south division. At least two-thirds of the observers in both Clark and Bingham Counties felt definitely that farm wages should drop lower during the post-war period than they are at present. In the two California counties, on the other hand, a majority of the respondents felt that farm wages should remain at about their present levels into the post-war period. The views of Clark County observers, without a doubt, are influenced by the great increase in wage rates which was necessary if farmers hoped to compete in some measure with shipyard wage scales. Bingham County farmers have not experienced the direct competition of war industries, but hourly wage rates have risen to levels which people of a typically rural county often are inclined to feel are exorbitant.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Farmer views on international relations are quite diverse, ranging practically from one extreme to the other. Some of the observers expressed the opinion that the field of international relations is an international game of "cat kill cat." Therefore, they believed that in such a world of competition the United States must first and primarily look out for its own interests before it starts sacrificing for other nations. Others believed that it is the part of wisdom and self-interest for the United States to do whatever it can do, even at considerable sacrifice, to help bring about peace and prosperity in the remainder of the world. Feelings and attitudes on the subject of the role of the United States in international relations are mixed, and often are based on emotions or prejudices rather than on reasoned judgments. This was particularly apparent from the remarks made in elaboration of the answers.





In each county except Bingham County a clear majority of the farmer observers opposed the continued rationing of farm machinery and equipment after the war in order to help farmers in other countries get a new start. Some believed American needs come first, whereas others pointed out that the type of agriculture practiced in most other countries was not well adapted to the use of American-type farm machinery. Still others felt that America's productive capacity was great enough to meet both domestic and foreign demands.

Despite their opposition to the rationing of farm machinery to help foreign nations, a majority of the observers approved the continued rationing of food after the war in order to help the people in wartorn countries get a new start. Around one-half of the informants in Clark and Imperial Counties, and practically three-fourths of those in Merced and Bingham Counties, approved the policy. There may have been an element of self-interest in the answers, but by and large the sympathies of the informants went out to the starving unfortunates of war ravaged lands.

A favorite post-war thought question is, "Should the United States participate in a world association of nations?" Asked this question forty-one of the seventy-two observers declared it should, and only twelve of the total group (one-sixth of the number) stated that it should not. The remaining nineteen were undecided. The greatest indecision on the issue was found in Bingham County, where seven of the fifteen observers ventured no opinion. In contrast, only three of the twenty-three Merced County informants expressed no opinion on the question, and it was in this same county that the greatest support for United States participation was found, sixteen of the twenty-three observers favoring this position.

It is fairly clear from the diverse and sometimes rather contradictory attitudes on the several questions pertaining to international relations that farmer opinions on these issues are in a state of flux. Their attitudes have not yet precipitated into any well-defined or consistent pattern. Farmers are groping for an American policy in international relations that will insure peace and neighborliness among the Nations and yet will at the same time protect the integrity and the independence of the United States.







## APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS, BY COUNTIES  
(Number of respondents answering as indicated)

## A. Migration and job opportunities

1. When the Army is demobilized do you think the Government should, or should not, encourage ex-soldiers from farm homes to farm by making land easily available to them?

	<u>Bingham</u> (15)	<u>Clark</u> (15)	<u>Imperial</u> (19)	<u>Merced</u> (23)	<u>All four</u> (72)	<u>Percent</u> (100)
Should	15	14	14	19	62	86
Should not	0	0	5	2	7	10
Undecided	0	1	0	2	3	4

2. When the Army is demobilized do you think the Government should, or should not, assist ex-soldiers from farms to get employment in nonfarm enterprises?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Should	13	7	13	15	48	67
Should not	0	6	4	4	14	19
Undecided	2	2	2	4	10	14

3. When the Army is demobilized do you think the Government should, or should not, encourage ex-soldiers from nonfarm families to farm by making land easily available to them?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Should	4	3	9	6	22	30
Should not	5	7	10	16	38	53
Undecided	6	5	0	1	12	17

4. What percentage of the men of this neighborhood who entered the armed forces do you think will come back here to live?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>
Number estimating	3	15	13	17
Lowest percent	90	40	10	40
Highest percent	100	100	100	100
Average percent	93	74	57	83

5. What percentage of the folks who left this neighborhood for defense jobs do you think will come back here to live?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>
Number estimating	3	14	12	17
Lowest percent	66	95	10	10
Highest percent	90	100	100	100
Average percent	82	99	46	72



6. If all the men from the armed forces and all defense workers did come back here to live:

a. What percentage of the men from the armed forces do you think there would be work for?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>
Number estimating	11	11	13	17
Lowest percent	75	10	10	60
Highest percent	100	100	100	100
Average percent	92	73	74	92

b. What percentage of the defense workers do you think there would be work for?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>
Number estimating	8	14	13	13
Lowest percent	60	0	10	30
Highest percent	100	90	100	100
Average percent	83	32	75	83

#### B. Institutions and organizations

1. Do you favor or oppose the further consolidation (or centralization) of rural schools?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	2	12	13	18	45	63
Oppose	0	1	4	3	8	11
Undecided	13	2	2	2	19	26

2. Is, or is not, your local school now offering all of the subjects you think your children should study?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Is	4	8	13	15	40	55
Is not	3	3	3	3	12	17
Undecided	8	4	3	5	20	28

3. Would you favor, or oppose, making the local school building(s) available for community activities after school hours?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	10	10	16	18	54	75
Oppose	1	0	0	4	5	7
Undecided	4	5	3	1	13	18

4. Would you favor, or oppose, the expansion of the school library to serve the adults in your school district?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	3	8	9	15	35	49
Oppose	0	0	6	6	12	16
Undecided	12	7	4	2	25	35

5. After the war do you think the school system should, or should not: (a) Serve hot lunches? (b) Operate a cannery for the convenience of farm families? (c) Maintain a shop where farmers can take their machinery and repair it?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Hot lunches:						
Should	13	13	13	22	61	85
Should not	0	1	1	0	2	3
Undecided	2	1	5	1	9	12
Cannery:						
Should	2	7	7	6	22	30
Should not	5	3	5	12	25	35
Undecided	8	5	7	5	25	35
Shop:						
Should	2	9	9	14	34	47
Should not	6	4	7	9	26	36
Undecided	7	2	3	0	12	17

### C. Government control

1. In the post-war period, do you think that in general the activities of the Federal Government in rural communities should be expanded, reduced, or remain about the same as now?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Expanded	0	1	0	4	5	7
Reduced	6	10	11	10	37	51
Remain same	4	2	5	7	18	25
Undecided	5	2	3	2	12	17

2. Do you think the Federal Government should, or should not: (a) Continue to maintain ceiling prices for farm products for at least two years after the war? (b) Continue to guarantee floor prices for farm products for at least two years after the war?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Ceiling prices:						
Should	10	5	13	10	38	53
Should not	2	6	5	13	26	36
Undecided	3	4	1	0	8	11
Floor prices:						
Should	12	7	9	12	40	56
Should not	1	2	10	11	24	33
Undecided	2	6	0	0	8	11

3. If you had to choose between a combination of price floors and ceilings and no price controls at all for the next two years, which would you prefer?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Price control	12	10	11	14	47	65
No price control	2	2	7	9	20	28
Undecided	1	3	1	0	5	7



4. During the first three years after the war, do you think there will be, or will not be: (a) A depression? (b) A business boom?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Depression:						
Will be	7	5	3	6	21	29
Will not be	0	7	13	14	34	47
Undecided	8	3	3	3	17	24
Boom:						
Will be	4	2	8	14	28	39
Will not be	0	11	6	7	24	33
Undecided	11	2	5	2	20	28

#### D. Security

1. Do you think farmers nowadays are worrying more, or less, than their fathers about being able to support themselves in old age?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Worry more	2	7	4	8	21	29
Worry less	12	4	9	11	36	50
Undecided	1	4	6	4	15	21

2. Do you think young farm people, by and large, will find it more, or less, difficult to make a decent living on the farm than did their fathers?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
More difficult	4	7	4	7	22	31
Less difficult	11	4	10	12	37	51
Undecided	0	4	5	4	13	18

3. If you or your wife had an extended illness in the busy season and incurred medical and hospital expenses of say \$500, could, or could not the costs be met without lowering your standard of living?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Could	6	3	14	11	39	54
Could not	8	7	5	12	32	45
Undecided	1	0	0	0	1	1

4. If some member of your family, other than yourself and wife, became seriously ill, and incurred medical and hospital bills of \$500, could, or could not, the costs be met without lowering your standard of living?

The answers to this question were the same as for the preceding except that one Bingham County "undecided" shifted to "could not."

5. Would you favor, or oppose, an increase of public clinics?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	4	14	17	15	50	69
Oppose	1	0	1	3	5	7
Undecided	10	1	1	5	17	24

6. Would you, or would you not, like to participate in some flat-rate prepayment plan to cover: (a) The costs of your hospital bills?  
(b) The costs of doctor and nurse service?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Hospital:						
Would	11	14	13	13	51	71
Would not	4	1	2	5	12	17
Undecided	0	0	4	5	9	12

Doctor and nurse: Answers same as above except that one Bingham County "would" shifted to "undecided."

E. Status, stratification, and standard of living

1. Do you think that in the post-war period the farm wages should remain about where they are now, go higher, or go lower?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Remain same	4	4	11	14	33	46
Go higher	0	1	2	0	3	4
Go lower	11	10	6	6	33	46
Undecided	0	0	0	3	3	4

2. Do you think that in the post-war period gross farm incomes should remain about where they are now, go higher, or go lower?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Remain same	12	0	10	15	37	51
Go higher	0	14	0	0	14	19
Go lower	3	1	3	5	12	17
Undecided	0	0	6	3	9	13

3. When wartime shortages are over, do you and your family plan to make any major purchases?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	10	11	13	12	46	64
No	5	4	6	11	26	36

First choice:

Farm equipment	7	6	4	6	23	
Automobile	2	0	3	2	7	
Household furnishings	1	2	2	1	6	
New Home	0	2	2	2	6	
Miscellaneous	0	1	2	1	4	

Second choice:

Farm equipment	1	5	1	1	8	
Automobile	0	0	1	0	1	
Household furnishings	4	1	2	1	8	
New Home	0	3	2	1	6	
Miscellaneous	1	0	1	1	3	



4. As compared with 1942, did your family in 1943 buy more or less:  
 (a) Food? (b) Clothing? (c) Household furnishings? (d) War Bonds?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
More						
Food	1	3	3	5	12	17
Clothing	0	4	3	5	12	17
Household furnishings	0	1	4	3	8	11
War Bonds	10	6	11	21	48	66
Less						
Food	6	3	4	8	21	29
Clothing	6	3	5	7	21	29
Household furnishings	10	5	5	11	31	43
War Bonds	1	1	1	1	4	6
The same						
Food	8	9	12	10	39	54
Clothing	9	8	11	11	39	54
Household furnishings	5	9	10	9	33	46
War Bonds	4	8	7	1	20	28

#### F. International relations

1. Would you favor, or oppose, the continued rationing of farm machinery and equipment after the war in order to help farmers in other countries get a new start?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	7	2	6	6	21	29
Oppose	2	8	12	16	38	53
Undecided	6	5	1	1	13	18

2. Would you favor, or oppose, the continued rationing of food after the war in order to help the people in war-torn countries get a new start?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	11	7	10	17	45	63
Oppose	3	7	8	6	24	33
Undecided	1	1	1	0	3	4

3. Do you think the United States should, or should not, participate in a world association of nations?

	<u>Bingham</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	<u>Merced</u>	<u>All four</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Should	6	8	11	16	41	57
Should not	2	3	3	4	12	17
Undecided	7	4	5	3	19	26